

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION

(acre)

CODE 561

DEFINITION

Protecting heavily used areas by establishing vegetative cover, by surfacing with suitable materials, or by installing needed structures.

SCOPE

This standard does not include critical area planting (342) or recreation area improvement (562).

PURPOSE

To stabilize urban, recreation, or facility areas frequently and intensely used by people, animals, or vehicles.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On urban and recreation areas or other frequently and intensely used areas that require special treatment to protect them from erosion or other deterioration.

DESIGN CRITERIA

Drainage and erosion control. Provision shall be made for surface and subsurface drainage, as needed, and for disposal of runoff without causing erosion.

Base course. All areas to be paved shall have a 6-in. base course of gravel, crushed stone, or other suitable materials. The material in place may be used if it is adequate.

Areas that support automobile traffic shall be designed for a wheel load of at least 4,000 lb.

Surface treatment. The thickness of the asphalt course, the kind and size of aggregate, the type of proportioning of bituminous materials, and the mixing and placing of these materials shall be in accord with good highway practice for the expected loading.

The quality and thickness of concrete and the spacing and size of reinforcing steel shall be appropriate for the expected loading and in accord with sound engineering practice.

The minimum thickness for a gravel surface shall be 2 in.

If other surfacing materials are used, such as cinders, tanbark, and sawdust, the minimum thickness shall be 2 in.

Structures. All structures shall be designed according to appropriate NRCS standards and specifications or Engineering Handbook recommendations.

Sprays and artificial mulches. Sprays of asphalt, oil, plastic, manufactured mulches, and similar materials shall be installed according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Vegetative measures. Liming, fertilizer, seeding, and sodding shall be according to the planned use and the local technical guide. If vegetation is not appropriate, other measures shall be used to prevent erosion.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Food Security Act, Swampbuster, and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act provisions must be

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considered prior to providing assistance on Heavy Use Area Protection.

Water Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, and transpiration.

Water Quality

1. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, animal waste, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.
2. Effects of changes in surface and ground

water caused by introduction of fertilizers for vegetated areas, and oils and chemicals associated with concrete and asphalt placement and other construction activities.

3. Effects of changes in surface water caused by the surfacing of confined animal feeding areas.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for heavy use area protection shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.